



# The Town of WESTFORD Massachusetts

## Town Manager's Newsletter

June 2009



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### Special Town Meeting

A citizen's petition has been submitted to call a Special Town Meeting to place the Boston Road parcel into conservation status.

There will be a Special Town Meeting on June 18, 2009, 7:30PM in the Abbot Gymnasium.

Visit [westfordma.gov](http://westfordma.gov) for current news and information.

### Dear Westford Residents,

Our Annual Town Meeting was conducted on May 9th and May 11th. Town residents acted on a warrant containing 34 articles. The results of the entire town meeting are available on our website at [www.westfordma.gov/townmeeting](http://www.westfordma.gov/townmeeting), but some highlights of the town meeting include the following:

- Approved the ability to consolidate administrative functions between the town and school departments.
- Approved the Fiscal Year 2010 operating budget.
- Approved capital requests totaling \$1,138,689 and placing \$361,311 into capital stabilization.
- Approved the renovation and construction of the Cameron Senior Center and the Town Hall.
- Renamed the Central Fire Station in memory of Harold A. Fletcher, Sr.
- Dissolved the Roudenbush Community Center Committee, and transferred care, custody and control of the buildings to the selectmen, including

giving them the authority to enter a lease on the properties

- Changed town meeting date to the fourth Saturday in March, unless it conflicts with religious holidays, when the selectmen may delay to a subsequent Saturday.

- Eliminated the requirement that special town meetings must maintain a quorum once started (200 registered voters are required to convene the meeting).

- Accepted the Comprehensive Master Plan.

The Board of Selectmen has received a citizens' petition calling for a special town meeting, which will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 18th, 2009 at the Abbot School. The proponents of this warrant article are asking the town meeting to preserve a parcel known as the "Boston Road Parcel" as conservation land. The Board of Selectmen had issued a Request for Proposals for an affordable housing development to be built on a portion of this town-owned land, and the board

subsequently voted to award the contract on May 7th. Both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee have voted unanimously not to support the citizen's petition. Information relevant to this citizens' petition is posted on our town's website at [www.westfordma.gov/townmeeting](http://www.westfordma.gov/townmeeting).

After 7 years of dedicated service to the town, Norman Khumalo, Assistant Town Manager, has resigned and accepted the position of Town Manager in Hopkinton, MA. One of Norman's final projects was to complete a Request for Proposals for the town's general insurance policies (excluding health). Through this process the town was able to reduce town insurance costs by approximately \$90,000 for FY10. Please join me in thanking Norman for his many years of service to the town, and wishing him the best in Hopkinton, and in all of his future endeavors.

I hope to see you at town meeting!



*(Information provided by  
Westford Water  
Department and U.S.  
EPA website  
[www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater))*

### Cross-Connection Control

*Water Department*

Plumbing cross-connections, which are defined as actual or potential connections between a potable and non-potable water supply, constitute a serious public health hazard. There are numerous, well-documented cases where cross-connections have been responsible for contamination of drinking water, and have resulted in the spread of disease. The problem is a dynamic one, because piping systems are continually being installed, altered, or extended. Control of cross-connections is possible, but only through thorough knowledge and vigilance. Education is essential. Even those who are experienced in piping installations fail to recognize cross-connection possibilities and dangers. All municipalities with public water supply systems must have cross-connection control programs. And those responsible for institutional or private water supplies should also be familiar with the dangers of cross-connections and should exercise careful surveillance of their systems.

A cross-connection program is required to prevent drinking water contamination from unapproved sources. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (such as boilers), systems containing chemicals (such as air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, and/or irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality.

Contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (such as water main breaks or during heavy water demand) causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Some specific examples of backflow incidents that can occur are:

Lawn chemicals backflowing (backsiphoning) through a garden hose into indoor plumbing and potentially into the distribution system.

Backsiphonage of "blue water" from a toilet into a building's water supply.

Carbonated water from a restaurant's soda dispenser entering a water system due to backpressure.

Backsiphonage of chemicals from industrial buildings into distribution system mains. Backflow of boiler corrosion control chemicals into an office building's water supply.

To protect the public drinking water distribution system, the installation of backflow prevention devices is recommended for all inside and outside hose connections. You can purchase devices at just about any hardware or plumbing supply store. Cross-connection and backflow information is always available at the Water Department.

[www.westfordma.gov/water](http://www.westfordma.gov/water)



## Summer Safety Tips

In cooperation with the Massachusetts State Fire Marshals office, we would like to offer the following tips for a safe and happy summer.

### Barbecue Safely

Use all barbecue grills away from the house in the backyard.

Supervise children whenever any grill is in use.

NEVER use gasoline on any grill!

### Charcoal Grills

Use only charcoal lighter fluid to start a charcoal grill.

Once the coals have been lighted never add lighter fluid to the fire as flames may travel up the stream of the lighter fluid that could result in serious burns.

### Gas Grills

Keep all LP-gas outside, 10 feet away from building openings such as doors, windows, dryer vents and 20 feet away from air intake vents (example air conditions) and all ignition sources.

All LP-gas cylinders with a capacity between 4-40 lbs. must be equipped with an overfill protection device (Tank contains an "OPD" valve).

### Fire Department

LP-gas grills are not permitted inside at all or on Balconies or porches above the first floor of any building where people live.

LP-gas is heavier than air and sinks. A leaky grill could pose a hazard to people and pets. Possible ignition sources include smoking materials, air conditioners, compressors, pilot lights and cars.

Make sure all connections are tight and secure. Use soapy water to check for leaks at connections and hoses as they dry rote over the winter.

[www.westfordma.gov/fire](http://www.westfordma.gov/fire)



*"Use all barbecue grills away from the house in the backyard."*

## CAMERON SENIOR CENTER ON THE MOVE – NEW LOCATION

We would like to thank you for your support at the Annual Town Meeting for the authorization of debt for Senior Center renovations and Construction.

The Council on Aging and their program and services are temporarily relocating to the United Methodist Church in Graniteville. We anticipate serving you from that address of 10 Church Street after our move on June 15<sup>th</sup>. We will occupy the accessible basement

floor of the church with entrance from the rear door Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. for approximately one year.

This floor will house our offices and program space. The Community Food Pantry will be smaller in size and will be open the third Monday, Wednesday and Friday of every month. The Thrift Shop will close on Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to stop at the store prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> for some huge bargains

We appreciate your patience and we're looking forward to providing full service as soon as possible. Our mailing address will remain the same: Cameron Senior Center, PO Box 2223, Westford. Please stop by our new location to join in the activities or for a pleasant cup of coffee and conversation.

[www.westfordma.gov/coa](http://www.westfordma.gov/coa)



### RECREATION DEPARTMENT – SUMMER OFFERINGS

The Recreation Department has a huge variety of surefire solutions for those summer 'what to do queries.' We have something for nearly every age group. For youth, day programs, field trips, swimming instruction, a wide range of sports and Center Stage Summer Arts Programs are available. For adults and youth, Tennis with Donna Holmes, and our comprehensive rowing program are offered.

And please keep in mind, Edwards Beach (at Nabnasset Lake at the end of Williams Avenue off Plain Road, and Forge Pond, (on the road between the Stony Brook and railroad tracks) are ideal locations for picnics, swimming and other warm weather fun.

**Program Information**  
[www.westfordma.gov/rec](http://www.westfordma.gov/rec)  
scroll down to  
Spring/Summer 2009  
Brochure.

There's no need to stray far from home. Join us and capture some summer magic, such as:

#### **Outdoor Adventures at East Boston Camps-**

For children ages 5-13 summer vacation starts here. June 30-July 2. Games, archery, scavenger hunts, swimming and much more are included. Enroll for one, two or all three days. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. \$50 per day, with options for early arrival (8-9 a.m.) and extended day (3-6 p.m.).

#### **Destination**

**Exploration** For children ages 8-13 who love being outdoors and learning about local wildlife, this is the perfect program. An insect safari, turtle patrol and building/maintaining a compost heap are just some of the activities planned. Swimming, water sports and fishing on Burge's Pond are also part of the program. One week sessions at East Boston Camps: July 6-August 14, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., with options for early arrival (7:30-8:30 a.m.) and extended day (3-6 p.m.) Refer to enrollment form for weekly fees.

#### **Adults Learn to Row**

**Outdoors-** on Forge Pond participants learn the sport. Two sessions: Tuesdays and Thursdays. June 30-July 23, 5:30-7 a.m. or 12-1:30 pm. July 28-August 20, 5:30-7 a.m. \$95 per session.

#### **Musical Theater – Center Stage**

##### **Little Thespians**

Provides beginning musical theater skills for ages 4-6. Four sessions: Mondays-Fridays, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. July 6-10, July 13-17, July 20-24 and July 27-31. \$150 per session.

**Rising Stars** This half-day program for ages 6-14 includes singing, acting, dance, art (costumes/scenery), drama and improvisation. Two sessions: Mondays-Fridays, 8:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. July 6-17 and July 20-31. \$395 per session.

[www.westfordma.gov/rec](http://www.westfordma.gov/rec)





## Highway Department Updates

May was certainly a very busy month for the Highway Department. Crews began the month by finishing the debris collection at the Highway Facility and road side pick up from the December Ice Storm.

In excess of 25,000 cubic yards of debris were disposed of by the Highway Department. To put this into perspective, that is the equivalent of over 250 tractor trailers that are commonly seen traveling our highways. The brush was reduced to wood chips and was recycled as an alternative energy source for producing electricity.

In mid May, the Highway Department experienced (2) sink holes in the roads that were caused by old deteriorating drainage pipes. As a result of this the Highway Department made an emergency repair to Oak Hill Rd. consisting of 200' of drainage pipe. The old stone box culvert that was installed under North Main St., most likely before they even invented automobiles, collapsed and repairs were made by the Highway Department. The Highway

Department also continued performing repairs from the Ice Storm to our roadways and trees. Due to the tremendous effort and time that the Ice Storm clean-up operation took, our Spring Clean-up schedule was delayed.

Spring Clean up consists of sweeping roads, repairing damage from the long winter and the cleaning and inspection of over 3,200 storm drain structures.

All gravel roads that are maintained by the Town have been regraded and shaped by the crews. A new 120' long handicapped access ramp was installed on the Common from Boston Rd. to the Bandstand.

It is sometimes hard to understand how much work goes into our projects because the best of our work is often buried. For example, the new handicapped access to the bandstand was constructed with a new product that allows the sod to be replaced, thus allowing a stable pathway which meets the requirements of the ADA (American with Disabilities Act), while maintaining the natural beauty of the Town Common.

As we look forward into June the Highway Department will be very busy attempting to catch up with our Spring Cleaning, pavement repairs, bridge repairs, line painting, traffic markings and drainage maintenance.

I would like to thank all of the Town residents for their patience with the late Spring Clean up.

The HWY Departments hard working employees are proud to perform to the high standards of insuring the safety and quality of life for all Westford residents. If you happen to see one of the Highway Departments Crews on the road, please feel free to beep your horn and give them a wave! They will appreciate it!

[www.westfordma.gov/highway](http://www.westfordma.gov/highway)



*"the Highway Department made an emergency repair to Oak Hill Rd. consisting of 200' of drainage pipe"*



*"In excess of 25,000 cubic yards of debris were disposed of by the Highway Department."*



### J. V. FLETCHER LIBRARY LAUNCHES THREE SUMMER READING PROGRAMS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

#### How can **Westford's Middle and High School** students survive the summer?

Join the Fletcher Library's Young Adult Department on a "Readabout" through the Australian Outback by signing up for the 2009 Teen Survivor Summer Reading Program. Students entering grades 6 – 12 can register beginning June 1 at the Library in the Young Adult and Children's Department or online at [www.westfordlibrary.org](http://www.westfordlibrary.org). C'mon Mates, join us "down under" and check us out for books, programs and prizes!

#### **Fasten your seatbelts - the J. V. Fletcher Library's 2009 Children's Summer Reading Program is going to be a BLAST!**

Plan your weeks around a star-studded galaxy of events and shows: sit in wonder as the constellations of the night sky appear above you inside the Museum of Science's inflatable Star Lab; listen to a story about Rainforest animals and then marvel as you get to see them each time they are introduced in the story; delight in the playful antics of Sparky's puppets; snuggle around the "campfire"

during evening Camp Read-a-lot Storytimes; meet and pet real mountain mushers (sled dogs) retired from duty in Alaska's Denali National Park; dance and sing at our outdoor concerts while you enjoy a family picnic; clap and laugh with one of our favorite comedic magicians, who also happens to have balloon sculpting talents up his sleeve and finally, share an afternoon with some of the world's most exotic creatures, like a porcupine with a prehensile tail, a coatimundis and an alligator!

**Sign up** for this free, Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library-funded summer of fun! Starting June 1<sup>st</sup>, children who read OR are read to can come to the Children's Room of the Library to put their name on a moon or star which will be displayed all summer on our bulletin boards. At sign up, children also receive special logbooks to record any books, magazines, or audio books that they enjoy during the Summer Reading Program.

#### **The Program begins Monday, June 22.**

Then, for the next eight weeks, children are encouraged to bring their logbooks with them

to the Library so the Children's librarians can celebrate what they are reading or have listened to; they will also get their logbooks stamped and receive a prize (one prize per week)! Sign up soon and join us for a summer where reading and visiting the Library is always a BLAST!

#### **A "Cents-ible" Summer: The Adult Summer Reading Program** will also begin on Monday, June 22.

The theme centers around cost saving programs such as recycling and selling items on Ebay, redecorating your home using items that you already own, and learning how to downsize by eliminating clutter. A complete list of programs will be listed in the brochure. Adults may register at the Information Services desk by setting a summer reading goal and filling out a raffle ticket. Registration makes you eligible for weekly drawings to Willow Books, a grand prize drawing for a gift basket and of course, once you reach your goal, come by and pick up your coupon for a free ice cream cone at Kimball's!



***"Sign up** for this free, Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library-funded summer of fun! Starting June 1<sup>st</sup>, children who read OR are read to can come to the Children's Room of the Library to put their name on a moon or star which will be displayed all summer on our bulletin boards."*



## Barbeque and Food Safety

### Barbeque and Food Safety

Cooking outdoors was once only a summer activity shared with family and friends. Now more than half of Americans say they are cooking outdoors year round. So whether the snow is blowing or the sun is shining brightly, it's important to follow food safety guidelines to prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying and causing food-borne illness. Use these simple guidelines for grilling food safely.

#### From the Store: Home First

When shopping, buy cold food like meat and poultry last, right before checkout.

Separate raw meat and poultry from other food in your shopping cart.

To guard against cross-contamination

Put packages of raw meat and poultry into plastic bags.

Plan to drive directly home from the grocery store.

You may want to take a cooler with ice for perishables. Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Refrigerate within 1 hour when the temperature is above 90 °F.

At home, place meat and poultry in the refrigerator immediately.

Freeze poultry and ground meat that won't be used in 1 or 2 days; freeze other meat within 4 to 5 days.

#### Thaw Safely

Completely thaw meat and poultry before grilling so it cooks more evenly. Use the refrigerator for slow, safe thawing or thaw sealed packages in cold water. You can microwave defrost if the food will be placed immediately on the grill.

#### Marinating

A marinade is a savory, acidic sauce in which a food is soaked to enrich its flavor or to tenderize it.

Marinate food in the refrigerator, not on the counter.

Poultry and cubed meat or stew meat can be marinated up to 2 days.

Beef, veal, pork, and lamb roasts, chops, and steaks may be marinated up to 5 days.

If some of the marinade is to be used as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade before putting raw meat and poultry in it.

However, if the marinade used on raw meat or poultry is to be reused, make sure to let it come to a boil first to destroy any harmful bacteria.

## Health Department

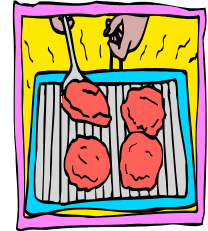
### Transporting

When carrying food to another location, keep it cold to minimize bacterial growth. Use an insulated cooler with sufficient ice or ice packs to keep the food at 40 °F or below. Pack food right from the refrigerator into the cooler immediately before leaving home.

### Keep Cold Food Cold

Keep meat and poultry refrigerated until ready to use. Only take out the meat and poultry that will immediately be placed on the grill. When using a cooler, keep it out of the direct sun by placing it in the shade or shelter. Avoid opening the lid too often, which lets cold air out and warm air in. Pack beverages in one cooler and perishables in a separate cooler. Pack clean cloths, and wet towelettes for cleaning surfaces and hands.

Continued on page 8...







### Barbeque and Food Safety Health Department Continued from page 7



Information taken from  
the U.S. Department of  
Agriculture

**Cook Thoroughly**  
Cook food to a safe minimum internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside. Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature. Beef, veal, and lamb steaks, roasts and chops can be cooked to 145 °F. Hamburgers made of ground beef should reach 160 °F. All cuts of pork should reach 160 °F. All poultry should reach a minimum of 165 °F. NEVER partially grill meat or poultry and finish cooking later.

**Serving the Food**  
When taking food off the grill, use a clean platter. Don't put cooked food on the same platter that held raw meat or poultry. Any harmful bacteria present in the raw meat juices could contaminate safely cooked food. In hot weather (above 90 °F), food should never sit out for more than 1 hour.

**Reheating**  
When reheating fully cooked meats like hot dogs, grill to 165 °F or until steaming hot.

**Keep Hot Food Hot**  
After cooking meat and poultry on the grill, keep it hot until served -- at 140 °F or warmer. Keep cooked meats hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook. At home, the cooked meat can be kept hot in an oven set at approximately 200°F, in a chafing dish or slow cooker.

**Leftovers**  
Refrigerate any leftovers promptly in shallow containers. Discard any food left out more than 2 hours (1 hour if temperatures are above 90 °F).

**Safe Smoking**  
Smoking is cooking food indirectly in the presence of a fire. It can be done in a covered grill if a pan of water is placed beneath the meat on the grill; and meats can be smoked in a "smoker," which is an outdoor cooker especially designed for smoking foods. Smoking is done much more slowly than grilling, so less tender meats benefit from this method, and a natural smoke flavoring permeates

the meat. The temperature in the smoker should be maintained at 250 to 300 °F for safety. Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature.

**Pit Roasting**  
Pit roasting is cooking meat in a large, level hole dug in the earth. A hardwood fire is built in the pit, requiring wood equal to about 2 1/2 times the volume of the pit. The hardwood is allowed to burn until the wood reduces and the pit is half filled with burning coals. This can require 4 to 6 hours burning time. Cooking may require 10 to 12 hours or more and is difficult to estimate. A food thermometer must be used to determine the meat's safety and doneness. There are many variables such as outdoor temperature, the size and thickness of the meat, and how fast the coals are cooking.

**REMEMBER!**  
Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. Refrigerate within 1 hour when the temperature is above 90 °F.

[www.westfordma.gov/boh](http://www.westfordma.gov/boh)